

News from the Wyoming Department of Health

Tuesday, April 7, 2009

Department Helps Wyoming Smokers Quit Expensive Habit

With recent dramatic increases in the cost of cigarettes and other tobacco products, Wyoming Department of Health representatives are reminding Wyoming smokers and spit tobacco users who want to quit that help is available.

A jump from .39 cents to \$1 a pack for the federal tobacco tax on each pack of cigarettes began April 1, on top of price hikes passed on by most tobacco companies last month. The federal tax on each pack of cigarettes sold in Wyoming is now \$1, with the state tax remaining at .60 cents. The tax and price increases also affect products such as chewing tobacco.

A pack of Marlboro cigarettes now costs \$5.25 in a typical Wyoming store, with the price for a carton at \$52.50. A Wyoming resident who smokes a pack a day can expect to spend more than \$1,900 a year on cigarettes.

The Wyoming Quit Tobacco Program, which is part of the department's Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services Division, offers low-cost cessation medications and free supportive services such as counseling to help smokers and spit tobacco users quit. Interested residents can call 1-800-QUIT-NOW or log on to <http://wy.quitnet.com> to enroll in the program.

"Quitting tobacco is not easy. Through either the phone line or web site, tobacco users who want to stop can find help tailored to their personal needs," said Kathi Wilson, tobacco cessation coordinator for the Wyoming Department of Health.

The Wyoming Quit Tobacco Program is the only state program offering all forms of nicotine replacement therapy, including nicotine patches, nicotine gum, nicotine lozenges, Wellbutrin, Zyban, Bupropion, nicotine inhaler, nicotine nose spray and Chantix.

Wilson noted residents must call 1-800-QUIT-NOW to receive cessation medication vouchers, but free counseling services are available through both the phone line and the Quitnet web site.

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